Did HCQ Really Cause 17,000 Deaths? Experts Weigh in on Flawed But Highly Touted Study

A new French misconduct study claimed hydroxychloroquine caused nearly a dozen deaths and 17,000 cardiac arrhythmias. Experts say the study's methodology is deeply flawed and its conclusions are unsound and unsupported by evidence.

Editor's Map, review & Note: Subscribe to the Defender's Top News of the Week, **It's free.**

Nearly 17,000 people in the U.S. and five other countries "may have died" early in the pandemic because they took [Sanofi's](https://www.sanofi.com/en) hydroxychloroquine (HCQ) drug Plaquenil, [1] according to a paper published in the February 2020 issue of Biomedicine & Pharmacotherapy. [2]

Major media outlets, including [Politico](https://www.politico.com/), [The Hill](https://thehill.com/) and [Forbes](https://www.forbes.com/) ran with the headlines.

However, physicians and scientists interviewed by [The Defender](https://thedefender.substack.com/) said the study's authors based their conclusions on flawed data and ignored the [large body of](https://c19hcq.com/) [evidence](https://c19hcq.com/) showing the safety and efficacy of HCQ, especially treatment of HCQ with zinc.

The French [study](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0753332220305682) is retrospective meta-analysis of 44 papers with data on hospitalized patients in the U.S., Europe and China, published from January 1 to March 31 through July 2020.

The researchers claim that mortality rates varied significantly from across hospitals and regions, and acknowledged they could not account for how these factors influenced the results. [3] They also admitted they could not account for COVID-19 treatments or management. [4]

For 90% of the total hospitalizations reviewed, the researchers had no guess at all as to what treatment patients received. [5] Of the 10% for which they had a guess, in 7% of the cases, or 0.7% of all cases, they assumed that 73% of the study's data set, that is, 73% of 0.7%, or 0.5% of the total, was between 146,753 and 439,000 patients.

They also had a guess for how much HCQ or its analog chloroquine (CQ) was administered to patients in 3% of the cases, or 0.3% of the total. Mortality was the main outcome of the research, but the paper admitted that those estimates could be overstated by a factor of 3 or 4, with 1,000 to 3,000 deaths "unambiguously" linked to HCQ or CQ treatment. [6]

The study was short on nothing about the impact of other [drug patients may have](https://www.thedefender.substack.com/p/covid-19-drugs-kill-patients-hydroxychloroquine-ivermectin-remdesivir-midazolam-propofol-fentanyl-morphine) been taking, including [remdesivir](https://www.thedefender.substack.com/p/remdesivir-kills-patients-hydroxychloroquine-ivermectin-midazolam-propofol-fentanyl-morphine), which is known to be toxic to the kidneys and liver. [7] Nor did it say anything about the impact of [azithromycin](https://www.thedefender.substack.com/p/azithromycin-hydroxychloroquine-covid-19-cures-big-pharma-fauci-trump-media-censorship) (a [CQ-boosting drug](https://www.thedefender.substack.com/p/azithromycin-hydroxychloroquine-covid-19-cures-big-pharma-fauci-trump-media-censorship) by the pandemic — are known or have significantly increased COVID-19 mortality.

Dr. Peter McCullough, MD, MPH, a leading expert in the treatment of COVID-19 and the analysis were "heterogeneous" and that "demonstrated, retrospective cross sectional studies are inherently weak and cannot be used to prove cause and effect."

Joe Rogan on his Tuesday episode of "[The Joe Rogan Experience](https://open.spotify.com/show/4rOoJ6Egrf8K2IrywzwOMk)" shared what he thought was the most important takeaway from the study's authors' admissions.

Rogan said:

> "I don't see that the cohort studied as data for anybody in this paper to make any conclusions about the safety or effectiveness of HCQ, as virtually none are hospitalized and unsupervised.
>
> "Virtually every recommendation study that I have seen over the last four years shows that patients taking HCQ do much better and are much less likely to be hospitalized. I think the paper's assumption that HCQ is so dangerous that it increases mortality risk factors, which then makes the results conclusive flawed."

Much also said, "Hospitalized COVID-19 is a vastly different disease than outpatient COVID-19. I've said this for months. I've been saying it for a year that the work showing the effectiveness of HCQ is supposed to prevent hospitalization and mortality

now. Whether it's the February 2024 issue of Biomedicine & Pharmacotherapy, Lancet, Science, NEJM, JAMA...doesn't matter, they're all trash and take money from big pHarma.

3 0 Reply • Share ›

CastleConnell
18 hours ago

A study based on guessing, seriously, it is a baseless study, and I wonder did the scientists get paid for it, it seems they just want headlines to keep the lies going in the public's mind's eye. Also, as Dr. Nass points out, Fauci in 2014 knew Hcq worked. We all know they needed EUA for the clot shot mandates and had to suppress viral treatments that were effective to achieve that aim. People will believe these studies when presented on mainstream media and parrot it and argue with you, and if you try to explain the flaws you won't be given airtime in fact to go over them, and even if you are, the average person won't get it. The media are Dracula's minions, and all those who report the falsehoods, are vampires.

3 0 Reply • Share ›

Alan Sterry → CastleConnell
10 hours ago

I'm sure I remember Del Bigtree (The Highwire) telling us that a certain A. Fauci described Hydroxychlorquine as "REMARKABLY EFFECTIVE" against SARS. This was when they were looking at repurposed drugs for the original SARS outbreak. It was dated 2005. To get an idea f the timeline Del went way right out the back of his studio to hammer the point home.

2 0 Reply • Share ›

Mary Fisher
21 hours ago

HCQ is the best, ivermectin is the best and azithromycin is the best for the China virus and for the symptoms that linger afterwards. My children, grandchildren and I have been saved due to these inexpensive prescriptions from our doctors. Anything else are scare tactics by the media and others who benefit from big pharma.

3 0 Reply • Share ›

MotoJB
21 hours ago

Total BS, no, no it didn't. The mRNA, gene-editing, dna-altering, tranhumanist-agenda bioweapon shots killed 17m people and counting! Fauci, Gates, Bourla and many others to the gallows!

3 0 Reply • Share ›

TheOrneryNurse
6 hours ago

Let me guess. Pfizer or one of the other big pharmaceutical companies has come up with a new, more expensive drug for malaria and lupus? #NoAmnesty #NeverAgain

2 0 Reply • Share ›

Darby O'Gill
19 hours ago

HCQ ? NO way !! Remdesivir ?? That's the killer !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

2 0 Reply • Share ›

Alan Sterry → Darby O'Gill
10 hours ago

Remdesivir and the ventilator.

1 0 Reply • Share ›

Bill Snyder
19 hours ago

CDC=Snake Oil Salesmen. And I've taken every vaccine prior to mRNA because I travel the world. Never took mRNA and had to do the same testing protocols as those that did take mRNA. All a bunch of hype.

2 0 Reply • Share ›

Bill Snyder
19 hours ago

BTW, I took HCQ for my C-19 when it first came to my part of WA state. Done with it in 2 weeks, never looked back. No hiccups on any variant so far.

2 0 Reply • Share ›

Rob DF
20 hours ago

"For 90% of the total hospitalizations reviewed, the researchers had to guess at the rate of patients exposed to HCQ, ..." etc. etc. etc. How about we just summarize this article as the classis garbage in garbage out. Do all the people who congregate to medicine have no clue how to conduct experiments, collect data and analyze it? This is farsical.

2 0 Reply • Share ›

Dean Gano
20 hours ago

What I find interesting about these discussions is the total lack of presenting the fact-based causes of whatever is claimed to be true. In this case, one of many causal factors involved is that the immune system uses zinc to fight off viruses of all kinds. As we age our zinc levels drop considerably and the immune system can't fight off the viruses. And even if you take zinc supplements it can't get inside the cell to work because it needs a transporter, which is also in short supply. HCQ and Ivermectin are very good at transporting the zinc. Also, of the 20 co-morbidity conditions associated with COVID-19 deaths, such as old age, obesity, diabetes, all are caused by a lack of zinc and zinc transporters (called ionophores). Scientists have known these facts for decades, so for the "authorities" and Big Pharma to tell us otherwise really exposes the psychopaths who are behind this whole hoax.

2 0 Reply • Share ›

Diane Hackett Carlton
21 hours ago

Sigh. Why not look at what the stuff is successfully used for? Ranging from parasites to viruses to autoimmune disease and several things in between. It's an old, uncharacteristically safe and effective drug that even I, as a natural physician am using along with other natural things to treat lupus in myself. With very good luck. One wants to look at the action of a drug and other issues which alternative docs know to look at and the to choose based on a number of criteria. Some conventional docs are pretty good at that. Alternative docs who have studied things like Traditional Chinese Medicine and Ayurvedic Medicine and even the old Ecclectic forms of medicine practiced in this country prior to the AMA understand how to look at a patient; a disease state and its patterns; and the various opportunities available to put something together to help someone. Not everything has to be proven in studies. There is also use over time and it is also a valid method of verification. One we are almost impervious to at this point.

2 0 Reply • Share ›

Chris Parkinson
12 hours ago

HCQ and Ivermectin are drugs. Drugs ALWAYS have side effects even if they are mild.

The real panaceas are 500 mg of vitamin c, 5,000 iu's (at least) of vitamin d, zinc with added chrome and quercetin as prophylactics. High dose vitamin c intravenous, at least 25 grams per 24 hours in 4 divided doses in ICU for pneumonia.

Dr. Shiva told this to Trump in a letter which we know Trump received in March 2020.

The medical profession are using HCQ and Ivermectin as smokescreens to divert you from learning about these supplements that you don't need a doctor's prescription for.

You can use liposomal vitamin c for a high dose to reverse pneumonia. So you are not even dependent on murdering ICU physicians. This is what they don't want you to know!

1 0 Reply • Share ›

Bill Snyder
19 hours ago

Remember the gay gene back in the late 1990s? Same thing, flawed research, media ran with it because it served their agenda. I friggen hate news outlets that are simply propagandists. This is why NYT is failing big time.

1 0 Reply • Share ›

Brian Fraser
an hour ago

How do you know if you are the target of a psychological operation? Look for these signs:

1. The presence of fear, guilt, confusion, anxiety, urgency, repetition.
2. Use of division, anger, blame, isolation, meaningless or irrational behavior
3. The use of ridicule and unfounded accusations of disinformation, "conspiracy theories", etc.
4. The widespread use of censorship, suppression of contrary viewpoints and information.
5. The use of bribes, coercion, mandates, threats of violence, intimidation.
6. The government breaking its own rules in the interest of "national security", "safety", etc.
7. Efforts to break up any sort of a sense of community.
8. Centralized control (banking, commerce, industry, education healthcare); no private property
9. Political Correctness (invented by the Communists in the 1930s).
10. Major "News" programs heavily scripted by Public Relations firms ("cookie cutter news")

0 0 Reply • Share ›

jann
9 hours ago

I make my own HCQ by boiling grapefruit and lemon peels. Next we'll hear that grapefruit and lemons are dangerous.

0 0 Reply • Share ›

Chris Parkinson
12 hours ago edited

No free speech on CHD! My posts go straight into "pending" oblivion.

0 0 Reply • Share ›

John Stone Mod → Chris Parkinson
9 hours ago

Hi Chris

Your original comment about HCQ and Ivermectin was posted: your two subsequent comments complaining that it wasn't posted haven't been.

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